

An Analysis of How Police Chief Pamela A. Smith Addresses Resilience Policing

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This resilience policing research illustrates the need for police leaders and departments to more directly address resilience policing elements. This analysis examines how Pamela A. Smith, the current Chief of the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), addresses resilience policing in Washington, DC. Our study uses document analysis to review content and themes related to resilience policing. We hypothesize that resilience policing will not be directly referenced but that resilience policing elements will be addressed. Through content and thematic analysis, we accepted our hypothesis. We also provide recommendations and policy implications to enhance resilience policing.

Keywords: DC, District of Columbia, emergency management, emergency management policing, resilience, resilience policing

INTRODUCTION

The City Resilience Framework (CRF) 2024 highlights the need for city leaders “to connect with the priorities of their communities while providing effective participation for what are often rapidly growing and changing populations” (ARUP, 2024, p. 6). Additionally, “Changes in climate and the increased incidence of natural disasters have brought police into contact with emerging forms of risk alongside their crime prevention duties” (Luong et al., 2024, p. 2). Thornley et al. (2014) asserted that local government officials “need a greater understanding of, and links to, the communities they serve” (p. 29). “Official disaster plans and systems need to be developed in collaboration with community organisations [sic] to ensure they take into account the diversity of needs in the community” (Thornley et al., 2014, p. 29). Furthermore, Thornley et al. (2014) identified “the need to improve the relationship between community

organisations [sic] and” local government agencies “characterised [sic] by transparency, good communication, partnership, and respect for local knowledge, skills and priorities” (p. 29).

An Interpol Innovation Centre (2022) report found that “there has been growing awareness about the importance of climate change”; however, “there is not yet a strong sense of urgency about climate change in policing” (p. 3). The same report asserted that “As global warming brings more natural disasters, police officers will likely be on the frontlines as first responders” and “that natural and human-made disasters are typically followed by longer-term increases in crime rates” (Interpol Innovation Centre, 2022, p. 6). The Interpol Innovation Centre (2022) also concludes that “while climate change is a global issue, it is intensively felt on a local scale” (p. 7).

As law enforcement professionals face climate change and the challenges it creates for communities, “resilience policing” serves as a “starting point for considering how state-based police organisations [sic] might contribute to collective disaster management activities in a climate crisis where” natural disasters “increase in frequency and severity” (Blaustein et al., 2023, pp. 1-2). Blaustein et al. (2023) assert that “resilience policing scholarship remains in its infancy” (p. 2).

Blaustein et al. (2023) assert that “transformation ultimately necessitates political changes which are themselves disruptive to the status quo” (p. 3). Hendy et al. (2024) assert that “investing in a resilience policing model means creating space for current and future sergeants to establish and exercise these skills and incorporate them into their” (p. 17) emergency response procedures. Hendy et al. (2024) conclude, “When it comes to emergency management policing, a significant challenge police face is that diminished governmental capacity means they may increasingly be called upon to assist with the management of civil emergencies” (p. 17).

Reist et al. (2025) examined resilience policing in the District of Columbia and found that “resilience policing” was not directly addressed in government documents. However, Reist et al. (2025) found that “documents identify efforts to build upon recognized community policing practices” (p. 10). Bagby (2022) asserts, “Police organization executives and leadership, who are aware of their environments, can improve performance and set achievable goals” (p. xvii).

Our case study examines how the current Chief of Police for the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD) in the District of Columbia, Pamela A. Smith, addresses resilience policing during four specific testimonies. This article will discuss Chief Smith’s career, legitimacy theory, community policing, resilience policing, City Resilience Framework 2024, and leadership. The research helped develop our methodology to collect data from the four testimonies. The authors will provide results from our content and thematic analysis. We identify recommendations and policy implications from these results and conclude with our case study’s limitations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Pamela A. Smith’s Career Summary

Pamela A. Smith served in various United States Park Police (USPP) roles for 23 years before being named the USPP Chief (National Park Service, 2021). Chief Smith:

served as a patrol officer, field training officer, canine handler, academy instructor at the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center, executive lieutenant to the chief of police, assistant commander of the San Francisco Field Office, commander of the New York Field Office, acting deputy chief of the Homeland Security Division, and deputy chief for the Field Operations Division. (National Park Service, 2021, para. 2)

Chief Smith was “the first African American woman to lead the 230-year old agency” (National Park Service, 2021, para. 1). In May 2022, Chief Smith joined MPD to serve as the Agency’s Chief Equity Officer (Metropolitan Police Department, n.d.-b). Chief Smith was promoted in April 2023 “to the Assistant Chief of Police, Homeland Security Bureau where she led the operational and administrative functions of the Special Operations Division, Joint Strategic [and] Tactical Analysis Command Center, and the Office

of Intelligence” (Metropolitan Police Department, n.d.-b, para. 3). The District of Columbia Mayor, Muriel Bowser, selected Chief Smith as the MPD Chief on July 17, 2023. Chief Smith was confirmed by the Council of the District of Columbia on November 7, 2023 (Metropolitan Police Department, n.d.-b). Metropolitan Police Department (n.d.-b) states, “Chief Smith is well known for her law enforcement commitment and advocacy, leadership, and her skillful passion to forge relationships within the agency and across the communities she serves” (para. 5).

Legitimacy

Police Executive Research Forum (2014) asserts, “The greatest job qualification for today’s police executives is the ability to recognize and respond to the swiftly changing issues and opportunities facing them” (p. 1). This has led “police executives [to] strive to maintain the progress in reducing crime while serving as effective” (p. 2) change agents applying legitimacy to law enforcement.

Police Executive Research Forum (2014) states that police chiefs who recognize legitimacy’s importance “in terms of achieving police department goals and producing benefits for everyone in the community” incorporate legitimacy “in what they say to police officers, and in what they say to the public” (p. 16). Legitimacy concepts are part of the police chiefs’ “everyday thinking as they plan police operations, develop policies, make speeches, hold community meetings, give news media interviews, and otherwise go about their work” (Police Executive Research Forum, 2014, pp. 16-17).

Hendy et al. (2024) assert, “The COVID-19 pandemic revealed significant challenges inherent to sustaining or legitimising [*sic*] a police-led approach to managing complex crises where governmental capacity is lacking” (p. 17). Hendy et al. (2024) suggest that police involvement during crises may “exacerbate risks or harms, and increase vulnerability. Regulating these encounters, managing the expectations of police executives, and coordinating operations with a range of partners are therefore vital elements of an effective, consent-based model of emergency management policing” (p. 17). Jackson (2015) asserts that:

because of the variety in departments across the country, issues of building trust and legitimacy are fundamentally local; after all, what local communities want to see from their police, what information they want from them, and what measures they view as sufficient to identify and respond to problems will differ from place to place. (p. 19)

Community Policing

The United States (U.S.) Department of Justice (DOJ) defines community policing as “a philosophy that promotes organizational strategies that support the systematic use of partnerships and problem-solving techniques to proactively address the immediate conditions that give rise to public safety issues such as crime, social disorder, and fear of crime” (United States Department of Justice, 2014, p. 1). Community policing has three key components: community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem-solving (United States Department of Justice, 2014). Basham (2020) found that college/university “community policing and emergency preparedness initiatives are not at odds with one another but are instead compatible processes” (p. 750).

Ayazma (2019) concluded “that community policing is an appropriate strategy to improve citizen’s resilience for a future terrorist attack and to increase their satisfaction with the police in order to enhance their quality of life” (p. 106). Farrell (2012) found that “engaging communities can make them more resilient, both from a public safety and homeland security perspective” (p. 89). Additionally, the research concluded that engaging at-risk community members into discussions “with government entities could provide a forum where subject matter experts can help refine how messages are conveyed to communities” (Farrell, 2012, p. 90).

Resilience Policing

Community policing’s three components loosely align with the three organizational resilient features that Bagby (2022) found important to policing: “That the organization can comprehend changing

circumstances and adapt to them quick,” “strong communication lines both within the organization and with its clients or partners,” and “have a proactive posture in understanding and mitigating potential risks” (p. 114).

Resilience policing “offers a valuable starting point for considering how state-based police organisations [sic] might contribute to collaborative disaster management activities in a climate crisis” (Blaustein et al., 2023, p. 1). Blaustein et al. (2023) asserts “that resilience policing may offer police and governments in liberal democracies around the world an accessible and useful template for incrementally enhancing their absorptive and adaptive capacities as emergency management actors,” may “enhance coordination between police and wider disaster management networks,” and may enhance the ability of the police “to contribute to the resilience of communities exposed to disaster risks” (p. 2). Mutongwizo et al. (2019) define five resilience policing elements:

1. there are new, uncertain harms; 2. diverse policing capacities are needed to respond to these uncertain harms; 3. police enroll other actors, for example, government and community resources to deal with these harms; 4. police act as facilitators/enablers in community capacity-building; there is a mutual dependency between the police and community; and 5. the outcome is that policing is done differently. (p. 611)

City Resilience Framework 2024

The City Resilience Framework (CRF) 2024 aims to “help a wider cohort of leaders, planners and investors to embrace collaborative and coordinated action on the resilience priorities their cities face” (Resilient Cities Network, 2024, para. 5). The CRF 2024 identifies seven resilience qualities:

Reflectiveness and resourcefulness are the ability to learn from the past and act in times of crisis. Robustness, redundancy and flexibility shape systems and assets that can withstand shocks and stresses, coupled with the willingness to use alternative strategies to facilitate rapid recovery. Inclusive and integrated relate to the processes of good governance and effective leadership, ensuring decisions are appropriate, and address the needs of everyone, by bringing together systems and institutions to achieve greater goals. (ARUP, 2024, p. 5)

The CRF 2024 also has four dimensions “that impact cities’ resilience ability” (ARUP, 2024, p. 5). The dimensions include health and well-being, economy and society, infrastructure and environment, and local governance and planning. The economy and society dimensions contain security and public safety goals. In contrast, the leadership and planning dimension contains goals related to accountable local government, inclusive civic engagement and participation, robust municipal finance and city management, secure and effective data management, effective emergency preparedness, and evidence-based planning (ARUP, 2024).

Leadership

Valero et al. (2015) asserted that “transformational leaders can build organizational resiliency by identifying a shared vision for handling future disruptions or disasters that inspires critical actors to believe in and to work toward accomplishing said vision in a cohesive manner” (p. 6). Valero et al. (2015) also stated that these “leaders engage in efforts to build the resiliency of an organization before a disaster” (p. 6). Furthermore, Valero et al. (2015) found that people “who perceived their leaders to exhibit transformational leadership style also perceived their organizations to be highly resilient” (p. 15).

Nguyen (2020) found that “one way to create a more resilient police department is to employ officers and supervisors with the commitment to building resilience” (p. 95). Nguyen (2020) also concluded that improving resilience factors allows police “to respond as a high-reliable organization to face leadership challenges in a major disaster properly” (p. 95). Farrar (2017) stated:

Resources are diminishing, demand is increasing, public expectation continues to grow and police leaders are now openly criticised [*sic*] in a way we would never have encountered in the past. Whilst unfortunate, much of this is now the norm and these demands on police leaders are not likely to ease in the future. (p. 245)

METHODOLOGY

Blaustein et al. (2023) asserted that empirical research is lacking regarding “how police might enhance the resilience of local communities in the face of disasters or improve the efficacy and responsiveness of crisis governance systems” (p. 2). The CRF 2024, stated, “City leaders need to connect with the priorities of their communities while providing effective participation for what are often rapidly growing and changing populations” (ARUP, 2024, p. 5). This study will examine how a major police department’s chief addresses resilience policing and its associated framework in government testimony. Our research question is: How does Chief Pamela A. Smith, as the leader of a major police department, integrate resilience policing into government testimony? We hypothesize that Chief Smith will not directly address resilience policing but will address all five elements of the resilience policing framework.

Tranfield and Starkey (1998) assert:

Management research is concerned not only with ‘knowing what’, but goes beyond this to consider questions associated with ‘knowing how’. It is concerned to build a body of knowledge which documents, codifies and articulates a problem and solution-set concerned with understanding and improving the practice of management. (p. 346)

Additionally, management research output “addresses directly the question ‘what are the implications for management?’” (Tranfield & Starkey, 1998, p. 346).

“Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents” (Bowen, 2009, p. 27). This qualitative study is based on four government testimonies given by Chief Smith. As a result, this study will use document analysis to examine the transcripts of the government testimony. Additionally, this research will examine the documents for content and themes. Content analysis will focus on manifest analysis, staying “very close to the text” by using the exact text and describing “the visible and obvious in the text” (Bengtsson, 2016, p. 10). This method will examine the frequency of specific statements or keywords. “Thematic analysis involves the searching across a data set...to find repeated patterns of meaning” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86).

This study used a similar process identified by Nowell et al. (2017) as “a practical and effective procedure for conducting thematic analysis” (p. 4). The researchers familiarized themselves with the testimony. This included documenting potential statements and keywords based on Mutongwizo et al.’s (2019) resilience policing framework and generating initial codes. The researchers then used MAXQDA (n.d.), a qualitative data analysis software, to search for 191 keywords and reviewed results to evaluate keyword usage in context. After reviewing the results, the researchers identified how statements and keywords aligned with themes identified by Mutongwizo et al.’s (2019) resilience policing framework. Lastly, the researchers then produced the discussion portion of this article. The aforementioned is not a “linear, six-phased method” (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 4). Instead, the thematic analysis is “an iterative and reflective process that develops over time and involves a constant moving back and forward between phases” (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 4).

Data Collection

The researchers selected the District of Columbia as a case study to further assess resilience policing after Reist et al. (2025) found that “documents identify local government efforts to expand community policing practices to support community resilience challenges” (p. 15). Our study will use four of Chief Smith’s testimonies before the Council of the District of Columbia. These testimonies addressed Chief Smith’s confirmation on September 27, 2023 (Council of the District of Columbia, 2023); the District of

Columbia’s Addressing Crime Trends (ACT) Now Amendment Act of 2023 on November 29, 2023 (Smith, 2023b); MPD’s Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing on February 13, 2024 (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024a); and MPD’s Fiscal Year 2025 Budget Oversight Hearing on April 9, 2024 (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b). If the hearing had multiple agencies, we used the portions relevant to Chief Smith or MPD. If available, the study used captions from the Council of the District of Columbia’s Hearings webpage (Council of the District of Columbia, n.d.). If captions were unavailable, this study used the prepared testimony from the Metropolitan Police Department (n.d.-a).

RESULTS

Content Analysis

The document analysis first focused on content to initially examine all four testimonies for specific keywords using MAXQDA. This research identified 191 keywords after reviewing Mutongwizo et al.’s (2019) resilience policing framework and the City Resilience Framework 2024 (ARUP, 2024). These keywords were utilized as part of the content analysis and aided in identifying where resilience policing themes were present throughout the text. Of the 191 identified keywords, 143, or almost 75%, were found in at least one testimony. Across all documents, the keywords appeared 4,359 times, or over six percent, out of 71,054 words.

Notably, “resilience policing” was not used in the testimonies. Additionally, words such as climate, climate change, emergency management, resilience, resiliency, and resilient were also not used in any of the testimonies.

Table 1 represents the number of words and keyword usage by testimony. Figure 1 shows the absolute frequencies of the top five words used in the testimonies. Figure 2 is a word cloud of the 143 used keywords. The size of the words in Figure 2 is based on their frequency of use. Lastly, Table 2 shows all keywords listed in frequency order.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF WORDS AND KEYWORD USAGE BY TESTIMONY

Testimony	Words	Keyword usage in document (# of times)
Confirmation Hearing (Council of the District of Columbia, 2023)	23,126	1,512
ACT Now Amendment Act (Smith, 2023b)	4,900	436
FY2023 Performance Oversight Hearing (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024a)	19,002	1,081
FY2025 Budget Oversight Hearing (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b)	24,026	1,330
Total	71,054	4,359

Note. Table 1 is based on data output from MAXQDA based on the four testimonies.

Word	ACT Now Amendment	Budget Oversight	Confirmation	Performance Overview
officer	44	140	108	139
there	8	129	134	108
think	0	134	113	121
not	27	101	94	87
crime	23	75	85	105

FIGURE 2
WORD CLOUD – 143 KEYWORDS – WORD SIZE BASED ON FREQUENCY OF USE



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TABLE 2
KEYWORD USAGE BY ORDER OF FREQUENCY

Keyword	Frequency	%	Rank	Documents %	ACT Now	Budget Oversight	Confirmation	Performance Oversight
act	309	7.10	1	100.00	58	81	100	70
crime	288	6.61	2	100.00	23	75	85	105
police	220	5.05	3	100.00	27	90	63	40
safe	195	4.48	4	100.00	15	78	64	38
community	183	4.20	5	100.00	4	66	80	33
department	134	3.08	6	100.00	13	39	46	36
public	121	2.78	7	100.00	24	25	54	18
safety	119	2.73	8	100.00	11	40	48	20
train	94	2.16	9	100.00	8	35	11	40
continue	92	2.11	10	100.00	5	29	30	28
law	90	2.07	11	100.00	24	26	27	13
invest	76	1.75	12	100.00	5	40	9	22
lead	74	1.70	13	100.00	1	17	50	6
vision	74	1.70	13	100.00	12	27	22	13
engage	71	1.63	15	100.00	1	24	28	18
enforce	69	1.58	16	100.00	3	17	33	16
plan	69	1.58	16	75.00	0	17	38	14
training	66	1.52	18	75.00	0	30	8	28
enforcement	64	1.47	19	100.00	3	17	29	15
inform	64	1.47	19	100.00	14	26	9	15
led	64	1.47	19	100.00	5	16	26	17
partner	64	1.47	19	100.00	2	10	27	25
resource	62	1.42	23	100.00	1	13	29	19
information	60	1.38	24	100.00	14	25	7	14
operation	55	1.26	25	75.00	0	21	10	24
violent	54	1.24	26	100.00	6	10	22	16
public safety	53	1.22	27	100.00	7	11	28	7
govern	47	1.08	28	100.00	8	9	21	9

government	47		1.08	28	100.00	8	9	21	9
change	46		1.06	30	100.00	8	18	11	9
law enforcement	39		0.90	31	100.00	1	12	23	3
agency	38		0.87	32	75.00	0	9	24	5
incident	38		0.87	32	100.00	4	11	6	17
response	37		0.85	34	75.00	0	5	11	21
criminal	34		0.78	35	100.00	14	3	9	8
system	34		0.78	35	100.00	3	12	13	6
together	34		0.78	35	100.00	1	6	13	14
action	32		0.73	38	100.00	8	7	8	9
share	32		0.73	38	75.00	0	9	14	9
engagement	31		0.71	40	75.00	0	12	12	7
leadership	31		0.71	40	75.00	0	9	21	1
prevent	31		0.71	40	75.00	0	4	13	14
include	29		0.67	43	100.00	5	13	5	6
civilian	28		0.64	44	75.00	0	15	3	10
effective	26		0.60	45	100.00	4	9	3	10
organization	26		0.60	45	75.00	0	9	14	3
respond	25		0.57	47	75.00	0	10	4	11
legal	24		0.55	48	100.00	12	8	2	2
risk	24		0.55	48	100.00	3	4	7	10
future	23		0.53	50	100.00	1	8	6	8
better	22		0.51	51	75.00	0	9	7	6
policing	22		0.51	51	100.00	3	6	9	4
security	22		0.51	51	100.00	2	6	11	3
local	21		0.48	54	75.00	0	11	8	2
best	20		0.46	55	100.00	6	8	3	3
appropriate	19		0.44	56	100.00	1	7	7	4
learn	19		0.44	56	100.00	1	1	10	7
crisis	18		0.41	58	75.00	0	2	6	10
emergency	18		0.41	58	100.00	5	8	2	3
experience	18		0.41	58	75.00	0	2	15	1
positive	18		0.41	58	75.00	0	3	9	6
shared	18		0.41	58	75.00	0	5	6	7
goal	17		0.39	63	100.00	1	10	4	2

fair	16	0.37	64	100.00	2	1	10	3
policies	16	0.37	64	100.00	2	2	1	11
prevention	16	0.37	64	75.00	0	1	10	5
investment	15	0.34	67	75.00	1	13	1	0
sustain	15	0.34	67	75.00	7	3	5	0
accountable	14	0.32	69	100.00	4	1	4	5
commitment	14	0.32	69	75.00	0	6	3	5
evidence	14	0.32	69	100.00	2	1	3	8
complaint	13	0.30	72	100.00	2	5	4	2
everyone	13	0.30	72	100.00	1	3	8	1
trust	13	0.30	72	75.00	1	0	9	3
assess	11	0.25	75	75.00	1	0	7	3
intentional	11	0.25	75	75.00	1	6	4	0
multiple	11	0.25	75	100.00	2	5	1	3
communication	10	0.23	78	100.00	1	4	4	1
diversity	10	0.23	78	75.00	0	1	5	4
network	10	0.23	78	75.00	0	4	2	4
organize	10	0.23	78	75.00	2	4	4	0
citizen	9	0.21	82	75.00	0	1	7	1
education	9	0.21	82	75.00	0	4	2	3
supervisor	9	0.21	82	75.00	0	4	1	4
collaboration	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	3	2	3
constitution	8	0.18	85	50.00	4	4	0	0
decision	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	2	3	3
joint	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	1	5	2
manage	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	4	3	1
secure	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	2	1	5
social	8	0.18	85	75.00	0	3	4	1
responsibility	7	0.16	92	75.00	0	2	2	3
evaluate	6	0.14	93	50.00	0	0	4	2
learning	6	0.14	93	50.00	0	0	5	1
reflect	6	0.14	93	75.00	0	4	1	1
regular	6	0.14	93	50.00	0	3	3	0
common	5	0.11	97	75.00	2	1	2	0
consistent	5	0.11	97	75.00	0	3	1	1

proactive	5	0.11	97	75.00	0	2	2	1	1
responsible	5	0.11	97	75.00	0	3	1	1	1
sharing	5	0.11	97	25.00	0	0	5	0	0
standard	5	0.11	97	75.00	2	1	2	0	0
capacity	4	0.09	103	75.00	1	0	2	1	1
participate	4	0.09	103	75.00	0	1	1	2	2
spare	4	0.09	103	25.00	0	0	0	4	4
accept	3	0.07	106	50.00	0	0	1	2	2
communicate	3	0.07	106	25.00	0	3	0	0	0
continuous	3	0.07	106	75.00	1	0	1	1	1
exchange	3	0.07	106	75.00	1	1	1	0	0
exercise	3	0.07	106	25.00	0	3	0	0	0
integrate	3	0.07	106	50.00	0	2	0	1	1
legitimate	3	0.07	106	50.00	2	1	0	0	0
management	3	0.07	106	25.00	0	3	0	0	0
meaningful	3	0.07	106	25.00	0	0	3	0	0
oversight	3	0.07	106	75.00	1	1	1	0	0
planning	3	0.07	106	50.00	0	1	2	0	0
robust	3	0.07	106	50.00	0	2	0	1	1
alternative	2	0.05	118	50.00	1	0	0	1	1
collaborate	2	0.05	118	50.00	0	0	1	1	1
community policing	2	0.05	118	25.00	0	0	2	0	0
decision making	2	0.05	118	25.00	0	2	0	0	0
diverse	2	0.05	118	25.00	0	2	0	0	0
extra	2	0.05	118	50.00	0	1	1	0	0
homeland	2	0.05	118	50.00	0	1	1	0	0
homeland security	2	0.05	118	50.00	0	1	1	0	0
outcome	2	0.05	118	25.00	0	0	0	2	2
rehabilitation	2	0.05	118	50.00	1	0	1	0	0
society	2	0.05	118	50.00	1	0	1	0	0
sustainable	2	0.05	118	25.00	0	0	2	0	0
weather	2	0.05	118	50.00	0	1	0	1	1
accessible	1	0.02	131	25.00	0	0	1	0	0
consistency	1	0.02	131	25.00	0	0	1	0	0
constant	1	0.02	131	25.00	0	1	0	0	0

cooperation	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	0	0	1
crises	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	1		0
educate	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	1		0
emergencies	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	1		0
evaluation	1		0.02	131	25.00	1	0	0	0	0
examine	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	1	0	0	0
informed	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	1	0	0	0
operate	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	0	1	1
shock	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	0	1	1
transparent	1		0.02	131	25.00	0	0	0	1	1
acceptance	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
asset	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
backup	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
capabilities	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
civic	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
climate	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
climate change	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
combine	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
combined	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
constantly	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
cooperate	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
decentralization	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
decentralize	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
deliberate	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
disadvantage	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
disaster	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
drill	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
educated	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
emergency management	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
evolution	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
evolve	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
examination	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
flexible	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
governance	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0
grievance	0		0.00	0	0.00	0	0	0	0	0

hazard	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
inclusive	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
influence	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
integrated	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
integration	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
interagency	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
interdepartment	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
manager	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
minority	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
modular	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
modulation	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
ownership	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
participation	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
procedure	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
redundant	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
reflective	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
reintegration	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
resilience	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
resilience policing	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
resiliency	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
resilient	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
resourceful	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0
secondary	0		0.00	0	0.00		0	0	0	0

Note. Table 2 is based on data output from MAXQDA based on the four testimonies.

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis focused on how sentences, based on context, fit into one of the five resilience policing themes identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019). The researchers found that all testimonies contained sentences that fit into each of the five resilience policing themes identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019). Based on context, some sentences could fit into more than one of the resilience policing frameworks identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019). In these cases, this study used standard keywords to determine which resilience policing framework theme the sentence aligned with.

Notably, while sentences were found in testimonies that could be grouped into one of the resilience policing elements identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019), in context, many did not relate to resilience policing as a “polycentric focus enables resilience policing to encompass responses to both everyday stresses and major catastrophes” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 607). However, the presence of the resilience policing elements in the testimonies demonstrates that MPD has the framework necessary to enable the District of Columbia “to survive material shocks” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 611).

New, Uncertain Harms

During Chief Smith’s (2023a) Confirmation Hearing, she highlighted how “about a quarter of [MPD] sworn officers have been on the Department for less than six years” (p. 6). As a result, officers “perspective and experience has been shaped by COVID...and January 6th” (Smith, 2023a, p.6). Chief Smith (2023a) asserts that these officers have “seen firsthand why MPD must always be prepared to support the city through major changes and emergencies” (p.6). Chief Smith’s (2023b) opening statement for the Addressing Crime Trends (ACT) Now Amendment Act of 2023 focused on traditional policing harms, such as carjackings, illegal guns, and robberies. During the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith (2024a) asserted that MPD was “prepared to tackle the challenges ahead” (p. 1). Again, during Chief Smith’s (2024b) testimony for MPD’s Budget Oversight Hearing, she discussed a decrease in assaults, assaults with dangerous weapons, burglaries, carjackings, homicides, robberies, stolen vehicles, and thefts from automobiles. While this data was easily quantifiable, other data related to “new harms that are emerging and requiring the attention of the police” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612) was missing.

Chief Smith (2024b) asserts that she “can envision a future where we will be able to talk about having achieved and sustained historically low crime in the District” (p. 2). The testimonies cover traditional policing harms but do not address “global and interconnected problems, such as...natural disasters” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 611). Additional emphasis on “predicting and preventing harms” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 611) was lacking in the testimonies. Mutongwizo et al. (2019) assert that “security governance leaders...have tended to favour [sic] responses that promote the social and political status quo...by presenting the crisis as an ‘opportunity to improve things’ rather than to change the way in which things are done” (p. 612).

Diverse Policing Capacities

Chief Smith recognized during her confirmation hearing that her tenure as MPD Acting Chief began “as the District is facing some critical public safety challenges” (Smith, 2023a, p.3). However, Chief Smith (2023a) immediately followed this statement by talking about increases in carjackings, homicides, robberies, and shootings, and “a 36% increase in D.C. Code index violent crimes” (p. 3). Additionally, Chief Smith (2023a) addresses these categories of crime being down “the past 30 days compared to the prior 30 days” (p. 4). Chief Smith (2023a) further discusses MPD’s Joint Operations Command Center and how the Center helps “ensure a high level of citywide coordination” (p. 4).

During the ACT Now Amendment Act of 2023, Chief Smith (2023b) discusses how the Department has the “lowest sworn staffing level in five decades” (p. 1) and that this is a “major public safety challenge” (p.1). Additionally, during the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith (2024a) talks about how “a new in-person recruiting unit is working to attract more prospects by building relationships with professors and student groups, to connect with students interested in law enforcement careers” (p. 4). The Budget Oversight Hearing highlights how Community Safety Ambassadors can “provide community-

oriented support” (Smith, 2024b, p. 6), and take on “roles that do not require a response from a sworn officer” (Smith, 2024b, p. 6).

During the Budget Oversight Hearing for MPD, Chief Smith (2024b) notes how “most of MPD’s local budget, or about nine out of every \$10 is for people” (p. 2). Chief Smith (2024b) also discussed MPD’s Police Leadership Academy, which brings “together a diverse group of passionate future leaders from across the country to engage in shaping the future of law enforcement” (p. 4). Additionally, the Department highlights how it sends law enforcement professionals to the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s (FBI) National Academy, Naval Postgraduate School, and the Senior Management Institute for Policing (Smith, 2024b). Chief Smith (2024b) also discusses wellness initiatives as “a healthy workforce that is grounded in principles of compassion and equity is better able to foster those values in its work with the community” (pp. 4-5).

The Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing highlights MPD’s Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC) and how it “will serve as a nerve center for law enforcement in D.C. and throughout the region to collect and analyze data, enhance situational awareness, and facilitate quick decision-making” (Smith, 2024a). Chief Smith (2024a) asserts, “The RTCC will also improve the overall efficiency of crime prevention and response efforts...” (p. 6). Chief Smith (2024a) also discussed how MPD can make day-to-day readjustments to their “footprint” and reallocate resources to areas where they are needed. During the Budget Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith discussed the importance of using technology to enhance public safety. “It is important that D.C. use industry standard technology that is helping police across the country effectively and efficiently protect the community, while respecting privacy and constitutional rights” (Smith, 2024b, p. 6).

Furthermore, “CameraConnectDC gives residents, business owners, and institutions a way to help solve crimes” (Smith, 2024b, p. 7) by registering their camera systems, which lets MPD know where cameras are located in the event a crime is committed in the area. This allows MPD to know that footage may be available to help solve the crime. Additionally, Chief Smith (2024b) discusses how apartments, businesses, and commercial facilities can integrate their cameras with MPD. “Cameras across the city will be a force multiplier for public safety, allowing us to provide real time information to responding officers. That is a very powerful public safety tool” (Smith, 2024b, p. 7).

Chief Smith highlights how “police cannot do everything, be everywhere” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612) and that police “must rely on the support of the public to tackle big problems” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612). Technology is being used and integrated as a “force multiplier,” and community policing initiatives allow a “rethinking of police approaches” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612). However, the testimonies do not specifically discuss emergency management or how policing can “provide significant leadership in prevention, preparedness, response, and recovery of disasters” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612).

Police Enroll Other Actors

During Chief Smith’s Confirmation Hearing, she discusses how she is “ready to work with members of the community and our partners in non-profits, business, and government to help create a safer city for all that fulfills the promise of our values of equity and inclusion” (Smith, 2023a, p. 3). Chief Smith also spoke about the Special Operations Division’s Joint Strategic and Tactical Analysis Command Center, and how the Center “was a great opportunity for [her] to reconnect with so many of the local, state, and federal partners [she] had previously collaborated with while at Park Police” (Smith, 2023a, p. 3). Additionally, Chief Smith also addresses how the Joint Operations Command Center “is critical to MPD’s ability to impact violent crime and increase safety for our communities” (Smith, 2023a, p. 4).

Chief Smith’s Confirmation Hearing highlights MPD’s Multiagency Police and Community Together (MPACT) initiative. MPACT “exemplifies the whole of government approach by bringing resources and services directly to the community” (Smith, 2023a, p. 6). Chief Smith also addresses how the District of Columbia’s Deputy Mayor for Public Safety and Justice (DMPSJ) has a monthly public safety meeting with the directors of public safety cluster agencies and that this is an opportunity for public safety agencies to discuss challenges and support each other.

The ACT Now Amendment Act of 2023 testimony discusses the DC Mayor's actions to introduce legislation and the Council of the District of Columbia's action to enhance public safety. This connection demonstrates the crucial link between those who make laws, the DC Council, and the Mayor as the head of the District's executive branch.

During the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith asserts that MPD is "working with [their] partners in communities and government to support public safety through a variety of strategies" (Smith, 2024a, p. 4). For example, the Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC) allows law enforcement partners to utilize their expertise and share information "across jurisdictional boundaries in real-time" (Smith, 2024a, p. 6). In the Budget Oversight Hearing, MPD discusses its efforts related to advocacy, community outreach and engagement, crisis response and support, social justice, and youth engagement. "We get a lot of information from those folks along those community safety walks, and it's not just necessarily related to crime, but also some of the other agencies we bring into these spaces when we conduct these walks" (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b). An example that Chief Smith uses during the Budget Oversight Hearing is that community members point out "that light isn't working and it's important for safety that that light be fixed" (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b).

The evaluated testimonies highlight MPD's efforts to "enroll other actors." Mutongwizo et al. (2019) assert that "the jury is still out on just how police can best enable, and support, the development and maintenance of resilience in response to the diverse harmscapes with which they are confronted" (p. 612). As stated, keywords such as "emergency management" and "resilience" are missing from all testimonies. Additionally, the testimonies do not mention MPD's collaboration or partnership with the District of Columbia's Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA). HSEMA's mission is to "ensure D.C. agencies, businesses, and residents are prepared to prevent, protect against, respond to, mitigate, and recover from all threats and hazards" (Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency, n.d., para. 1).

Police Act as Facilitators/Enablers

During Chief Smith's Confirmation Hearing, she spoke about the Department's Community Engagement Division and stated that the Division "does not change the fact that [MPD] patrol officers are engaging with the community every day in every neighborhood" (Smith, 2023a, p. 5). Additionally, Chief Smith stated that she "directed all of [MPD] patrol districts to conduct at least one scheduled community walk each week, providing an opportunity for patrol leaders to hear directly from a variety of community members and to see neighborhoods [sic] streets through their eyes" (Smith, 2023a, p. 5). Furthermore, Chief Smith recognized that "Agency partners are also frequently joining [MPD] walks so they can follow up on issues needing attention such as lighting, trees, and trash" (Smith, 2023a, p. 5).

During the ACT Now Amendment Act of 2023 testimony, Chief Smith (2023b) asserts that "disrupting the illegal activity will allow time for communities to come together to reclaim their public space, and potentially to work with other government and community partners to enhance it" (p. 2). During the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith said, "As a city, we must find ways to prevent at-risk behavior by our youth. Families, communities, and other partners must all come together to set the boundaries" (Smith, 2024a, p. 3). Additionally, Chief Smith discusses "Operation Peaceful Neighborhoods," a partnership between MPD and the Department of Aging and Community Living, Department of Health, Department of Public Works, Humane Rescue Alliance, and others. Operation Peaceful Neighborhoods focuses "on identifying, investigating, and resolving criminal activity taking place in buildings that are sometimes unoccupied or occupied by senior or vulnerable adults" (Smith, 2024a, p. 7). Chief Smith asserts, "when police and community members walk through a neighborhood together, they have an opportunity to identify challenges and possible solutions together, strengthening these partnerships" (Smith, 2024a, p. 4).

MPD's Budget Oversight Hearing claims police district stations "are important hubs for the community. Community members come to report crimes, access police services, print emergency parking signs, and attend community meetings and events" (Smith, 2024b, p. 9). Chief Smith asserts that "a safe city makes all other progress possible" (Smith, 2024b, p. 10). Chief Smith also discusses "business beat officers" and

the placement of QR codes in businesses, which requires officers to get out of their vehicle and go into establishments (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b). Chief Smith said:

I've found over the years of policing...that when you communicate and get to know the people that you're working with, you gather more information about what's happening in your community. These officers become a viable presence in those businesses, [and] then the business owner also knows who to call when things start to happen. (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b)

Chief Smith continues to discuss the mutual dependence between the police and the community by saying,

"the relationship between young people and the police department is very vital and it's critical...it's the difference between whether a young person will go in the opposite direction or whether a young person will stay on the right path" (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024b).

The testimonies demonstrate how MPD is "actively engaged in building networks of resources" (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 613). Chief Smith articulates the mutual supportive partnership between MPD and the community. In the context of "bringing together the resources required to restore order, bounce forward following an incident, as well as honing response capacities for future events" (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 612), this study found those themes to be addressed. However, these themes are not directly connected to resilience or "the building of resilience...facilitated by, police" (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 614).

Policing Is Done Differently

During her confirmation hearing, Chief Smith said, "Certainly there's going to be the opportunity for [her] to re-evaluate and reassess how we've done it in the past to see if there's a need for us to do something different going" (Council of the District of Columbia, 2023). Chief Smith echoed a similar statement during the ACT Now Amendment Act of 2023 testimony, "When it comes to matters of public safety, it is important that we all be willing to assess our efforts and continue to adjust when appropriate" (Smith, 2023b, p. 5). However, in context, this statement is applied to asphyxiating/neck restraints, body-worn cameras, and vehicle pursuits. In the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith recognized that it was important for MPD to "expand opportunities from positive and productive encounters with community members" (Council of the District of Columbia, 2024a). Additionally, Chief Smith discussed Safe Commercial Corridor Hubs, which are "staffed by multiple operational outreach teams including MPD. The agencies connect residents to services and increase visibility in these corridors" (Smith, 2024a, p. 5). Chief Smith addresses her deployment of police officers to areas "based on recent crime trends" (Smith, 2024a, p. 5).

During the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith said, "It is difficult to isolate the impact of a single initiative when we are implementing multiple new strategies and programs simultaneously" (Smith, 2024a, p. 5). Chief Smith also mentioned MPD's expansion "of a hot spots policing effort," lauded it as "Evidence-Based Policing," and said, "the focused and active police presence in the neighborhood helps to both drive down crime and reduce the community fear of crime." (Smith, 2024a, p. 6). Furthermore, Chief Smith highlighted the Real-Time Crime Center's ability "to monitor and respond to criminal activities in real-time" (Smith, 2024a, p. 6). Additionally, camera use helps MPD solve crime (Smith, 2024a). The civilization of positions to ensure officers do sworn tasks and professional staff do non-sworn tasks is discussed during the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing and Budget Oversight Hearing (Smith 2024a & Smith 2024b). Also, during the Fiscal Year 2023 Performance Oversight Hearing, Chief Smith discusses MPD's goal to "respond to the needs of [D.C.'s] residents in service of the District of Columbia, Policing with purpose and serving with care..." (Smith, 2024a, p. 8) a "shared purpose" and "shared commitment" (Smith, 2024a, p. 9) between MPD and the Council of the District of Columbia. This theme is carried forward in the Budget Oversight Hearing, as Chief Smith asserts that combined progress makes "D.C. a safer city" (Smith, 2024b, p. 9).

Mutongwizo et al. (2019) posit, “What is now important, as resilient policing gains greater momentum, is that discussions about resilience be made increasingly legible and inclusive...to make citizens increasingly active participants in, as opposed to passive recipients of, resilience strategies” (p. 614). This study’s content analysis quantified the presence of keywords, and the lack of specific mentions of resilience. Mutongwizo et al. (2019) state that resilience policing has “clear resonances to problem-oriented policing” (p. 614). The testimonies clearly highlight how MPD addresses evidence-based policing and uses the Real-Time Crime Center to identify and analyze specific public safety challenges. Further, MPD develops and tests solutions and makes response adjustments as needed. The thematic analysis also revealed that Chief Smith promotes “a whole-of-government and whole-of-community” (Mutongwizo et al., 2019, p. 615).

RECOMMENDATIONS AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

To provide recommendations and policy implications based on this study’s results, the authors reviewed the Disaster Resilience Framework (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019) and City Resilience Framework 2024 (ARUP, 2024). Our recommendations will primarily be focused on efforts that MPD can undertake. However, the Council of the District of Columbia may need to legislate some policy changes. Lastly, we will provide broader policy recommendations that could drive the nationwide implementation of resilience policing.

The Disaster Resilience Framework is based on “three broad overlapping principles” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). While the authors recognize that the Disaster Resilience Framework was created “to support analysis of federal opportunities to facilitate and promote resilience to natural hazards” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 1), we assert that these can be used on the local level by the DC government to promote resilience policing. The Disaster Resilience Framework’s three principles are information, integration, and incentives (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019).

Information

Throughout the testimonies, Chief Smith described partnerships, discussed data, shared information, and spoke about how MPD coordinated efforts to reduce crime in the District of Columbia. Regarding data, Chief Smith’s testimony focused mainly on crime statistics and easily quantified numbers, such as the number of arrests and illegal firearms seized. MPD could benefit if it shared “additional information that would help decision makers understand their disaster risk” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). This information should be shared in a manner that reduces “the complexity of...risk information for non-technical audiences” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4).

MPD could also “advance methodologies or processes to measure the current state” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4) of resilience policing to “promote monitoring of progress toward resilience on a programmatic basis” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). Data that could be shared includes the number of community walks, engagements with vulnerable populations about emergencies, and events attended with HSEMA. An Office of the District of Columbia Auditor report recommended that MPD enhance the “use of data to inform policies and practices on preventing and mitigating crime” (Patterson, 2023, p. 3) and that MPD ensures “that policy and practice are based on what the data tell us” (Patterson, 2023, p. 4). The Office of the District of Columbia Auditor (2024) concluded that “the District has multiple efforts underway to interrupt violence but agencies are not measuring those efforts in a meaningful way to know what is working, what can be improved, and how.”

PFM Group Consulting, LLC et al. (2024) found that MPD needed more “accurate and comprehensive data collection to inform future studies and to more critically assess staffing adequacy, policing effectiveness, and community satisfaction.” Patterson et al. (2024) also concluded that “the [D]epartment should consider ensuring that important data such as use of force is published online at least annually and in a timely fashion. This would increase the Department's democratic accountability to the DC community” (p. 4). “The just policing pillar measures whether an agency operates fairly, equitably, and constitutionally. MPD scored 67.56% in this area, which is its lowest-scored pillar” (Patterson et al., 2024, p. 4).

Chief Smith is “a graduate of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) National Academy (Session 265)” (Metropolitan Police Department, n.d.-b, para. 8). To help share information about resilience policing, MPD could incorporate the topic into their DC Police Leadership Academy (n.d.) which “convenes a diverse cohort of emerging leaders with the goal of shaping the future of law enforcement.” Additionally, to provide information about resilience policing across the United States, the federal government could incorporate the topic into the education and training opportunities provided by the Center for Domestic Preparedness, Center for Homeland Defense and Security, Federal Bureau of Investigation, National Disaster and Emergency Management University, Naval Postgraduate School, and others.

Integration

MPD can integrate DC’s Homeland Security and Emergency Management Agency (HSEMA) into community walks to “help leverage and synthesize disaster risk information” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). MPD, the Council of the District of Columbia, and the Mayor can incorporate resilience policing into relevant District strategies by convening “stakeholders with different perspectives and interests to create whole systems solutions” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). This effort would “encourage governance mechanisms that foster coordination and integrated decision making within and across levels of government” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). ARUP (2024) asserted that “cities must understand how different sectoral efforts align or can be mutually beneficial and where gaps exist to effectively face these complex challenges” (p. 16). ARUP (2024):

can help cities develop a consistent approach to resilience across the complex structure of city governance, enabling leaders to see where there are synergies between strategies, where the goals of one strategy could support another, or where they might be at odds. This can help cities better understand where resources can be shared, where coordination between city departments needs to take place, and how to integrate technical methodologies with city systems. (p. 16)

To this end, the City Resilience Framework 2024 could be used by MPD to understand how the public safety ecosystem is connected to other systems. This effort could spark discussions about achieving efficiencies, which is crucial in a resource-constrained environment.

The ability to share information about resilience policing through various education and training opportunities was discussed in the information section above. However, education and training can also help leaders integrate resilience policing after they are informed. The New York University School of Law’s Policing Project designed the Safe, Accountable, Just, and Effective (SAJE) Policing Assessment. The assessment “is a tool designed to define and measure the characteristics of a sound, accountable, just, and effective policing agency. This...resource helps police leaders and agencies, municipal leaders, and the communities they serve understand agency performance across 100 critical metrics” (Policing Project, n.d.). Resilience policing could be incorporated as one of the assessment’s critical metrics.

Patterson et al. (2024) concluded:

MPD does not have policies, guidelines, or training in problem-oriented policing (POP). They also do not give officers dedicated time to engage in POP. The Department states that the Mayor’s Office of Community Relations and Services (MOCRS) is responsible for coordinating teams to address chronic problems. We encourage MPD to rethink this strategy as POP has strong evidence base and has been shown to be one of the most effective methods to reduce crime. Without training and time to engage in POP, patrol officers are without one of the strongest tools in their arsenal – the ability to actively try to solve crime problems rather than just react to the harmful consequences of problems. (p.7)

Ikerd (2010) also concluded:

POP is effective and becoming an accepted way of handling community problems at the practitioner level...Even though research has demonstrated the effectiveness of POP, officers and departments must actually put POP into practice for the community benefits to be realized. (p. 503)

Incentives

Incentives can “improve program design to motivate risk-reduction action” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 4). To encourage resilience policing, the Council of the District of Columbia, the Mayor, and MPD could find ways to incentivize the community to be involved in resilience policing projects. The aforementioned entities could also reduce disincentives to “alleviate unnecessary administrative burden” and “streamline review” (United States Government Accountability Office, 2019, p. 14).

The United States Government Accountability Office (2019) recognized that “voluntary certifications play a role in ensuring” resilience (p. 13). The Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (CALEA) (2023) mission is “to improve the delivery of public safety services, primarily through voluntary public safety agency accreditation programs. Organized and maintained in the public interest” (p.2). CALEA accreditation provides “an agency’s Chief Executive Officer, on a continuing basis, a blueprint that promotes the efficient use of resource, improves service delivery, and strengthens existing procedures” (Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc., 2023, p. 2). Resilience policing elements could be incorporated into CALEA as part of their accreditation standards. According to the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. (n.d.), MPD is not a CALEA-accredited agency.

LIMITATIONS

This study focused on a specific police leader with a diverse career. The research only focused on how Chief Smith addressed resilience policing as the MPD Chief; it does not evaluate how she may or may not have addressed resilience policing as the United States Park Police (USPP) Chief. Stemler (2001) asserted that “fatal flaws that destroy the utility of a content analysis are faulty definitions of categories and non-mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories” (p. 5). The case study focused on evaluating specific testimony for the five resilience policing elements identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019) and does not assess if other underlying themes are present. Future research could assess if other underlying themes are present in resilience policing beyond those initially identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019).

The case study focuses on a particular time. Chief Smith has been the MPD Chief since July 17, 2023, and was officially confirmed on November 7, 2023. The available testimony to examine was limited. Each District of Columbia agency has an annual oversight and budget hearing. Given the time of this case study, the researchers only evaluated one oversight testimony and one budget hearing testimony.

The District of Columbia is a unique urban environment. It is the home to the seat of government for the United States. One of the policing resilience elements is that policing is decentralized. The “District of Columbia has a land area of 61.1 square miles and a water area of 7.2 square miles” (United States Census Bureau, n.d.). The broader implications of this case study are how jurisdictions can apply the resilience policing framework to assess how their communities address resilience policing. Future studies could focus on interviews with police chiefs to further develop empirical research regarding resilience policing.

CONCLUSION

The District of Columbia Mayor, Muriel Bowser, asserted the community “wanted [a police chief] who could advocate for a better policy environment while leading MPD and engaging residents,” that “Chief Smith hit the ground running...sharing her story and vision, making sure she was accessible to residents

and businesses,” and that MPD will “continue engaging and working with community stakeholders and our partners on the Council and in the criminal justice system” (Metropolitan Police Department, 2023, para. 2).

This research reviewed Chief Smith’s career, legitimacy theory, community policing, resilience policing, City Resilience Framework 2024, and leadership. Our methodology was based on content and thematic analysis. The content and thematic analysis assessed how Chief Smith addressed resilience policing in four testimonies before the Council of the District of Columbia. This study’s content analysis found that key terms, such as resilience and resilience policing, were not among the 71,054 words evaluated. The case study’s thematic analysis concluded that all five resilience policing elements identified by Mutongwizo et al. (2019) were addressed. However, in context, these themes were not directly connected or related to resilience policing. We identified recommendations and policy implications grouped by the three broad Disaster Resilience Framework principles identified by the United States Government Accountability Office (2019). Our recommendations were related to information, integration, and incentives. Lastly, we recognized the limitations of this case study and asserted that the framework can assist jurisdictions in more broadly assessing how they implement resilience policing and can enhance their efforts.

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